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TO RUEHC/SECSTATE WASHDC IMMEDIATE 7973
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C O N F I D E N T I A L CAIRO 002723

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E.O. 12958: DECL: 05/09/2016

TAGS: PREL PARM EG KNNP

SUBJECT: EGYPT'S NATIONAL COMMITTEE MEETING ON THE
PROLIFERATION SECURITY INITIATIVE

REF: A. STATE 66885

1B. CAIRO 2417

Classified by ECPO Minister Counselor Michael Corbin for
reasons 1.4(b) and (d).

¶1. (U) This is an action request. Please see paragraph
four.

¶12. (C) MFA's Disarmament Director Dr. Hossam Aly told
poloff that a recent National Committee meeting to review the
Proliferation Security Initiative (PSI) (Refs A and B)
included representatives of all relevant ministries,
including the Ministry of Defense, the Egyptian Atomic Energy
Agency, Customs and Immigration, the Directorate of Military
Intelligence, and the Egyptian General Intelligence Service.
Aly said that while Defense and Foreign Ministry officials
have a clear understanding of PSI, some of the other
participants lacked substantive background. Some raised
questions suggesting that endorsing the PSI would expose
Egyptian flagged ships to increased vulnerability to
interdiction or be misused to disrupt traffic in and revenues
from the Suez Canal. Aly passed poloff a non-paper (see para
four below) containing all of the questions raised at the
meeting. He acknowledged that USG officials had already
answered a number of the questions and, in reviewing the
questions with poloff, conceded that many of the concerns
raised were unfounded, but still requested answers. Aly
cautioned that suspicion exists on PSI. He also said that
GOE officials do not understand why the USG can say that over
70 countries support the initiative, but cannot provide a
comprehensive list of the countries.

¶13. (C) Dr. Aly said that the MFA would convene another
National Committee meeting to continue the PSI discussion,
but noted that an endorsement in the near term was unlikely.
(Note: Ministry of Defense officials continue to tell us
that they are not interested in pursuing the PSI because
maritime counterproliferation cooperation, which is handled
on a case-by-case basis, works very well, and there are
recent cases to prove this. End note).

¶14. (C) Action requested: Please assist post with answering
questions 1, 4, 6, 7, 8, 10, 12, 14, and 15 in the non-paper
below. Post can answer the remaining questions using
background material that Washington has already provided.

Begin text of non-paper as received from MFA:

Questions on PSI

¶11. As an arrangement without a Secretariat, rules of
procedure, or a review possibility, what other international
arrangements can PSI compare to;

¶12. Are countries that announced their support for PSI immune

against interdiction of their vessels?

¶3. Are they more vulnerable to the interdiction of their vessels?

¶4. Does joining PSI entail the facilitation of foreign access into national territorial waters or national territory?

¶5. Do national activities and internal transport fall under the object of PSI potential interdiction procedures?

¶6. Are there any means to verify intelligence data being relied on to request an interdiction?

¶7. What is the difference in status and nature of membership between the 11 core members and the rest?

¶8. How often have interdictions taken place since the announcement of PSI (How many operations have taken place? Where? What is the percentage of cases in which suspect cargo was located?)

¶9. Does interdiction cover commercial vessels only or cover military vessels as well?

¶10. What are the effective measures against confusion of civil dual purpose items with WMD components;

¶11. Is PSI a stable arrangement or does it represent a basis for further development which will also commit current members?

¶12. Does the State closest to the interdiction point choose which other States take part in the operation?

¶13. Is interdiction normally conducted by the State in its territorial domain or vicinity or does PSI allow foreign conduct (or contribution) to such interdiction?

¶14. Are there countries which have joined PSI and then pulled out of it?

¶15. Is there any connection between the obligations imposed by PSI and those imposed by international instruments on WMD disarmament and non-proliferation? (i.e, Can a country that is not a member of the NPT take part in the interdiction of suspected nuclear shipment? Or can a country that is not a CWC member take part in an interdiction of a suspected

chemical weapons shipment? Will a country that is not a member to the NPT be controlled under PSI and its potential illicit nuclear shipments be a primary object of interdiction?)

¶16. Would there be a need to adapt national legislation to PSI? If yes, to what extent?

¶17. Which national authorities are normally involved in the implementation of PSI?

End text of non-paper.

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